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## Psychodiagnostics in student's understanding, P

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### Abstract

Psychodiagnostic methods are often used in different kinds of practical psychology.

In our opinion, education of psychodiagnostics isn't limited to the mastery of knowledge, skills and abilities. Studying includes objective knowledge and personal attitude to the subject of study, the unity of the cognitive and affective components.

Therefore, the purposes of our research were studying and detection the differences in understanding students - psychologists of psychodiagnostics as a kind of practical activity.

Research results let us make the conclusion, that understanding of psychology as theory and practice becomes more differentiated and individual at students to the final year.

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### 1. Introduction

In recent years, the needs of society of Kazakhstan in practical psychology has been increased appreciably. Psychodiagnostics is one of the basic and traditional activities of a practical psychologist. The purpose of psychodiagnostic survey is identification and measuring personality, individual and psychological characteristics on the basis of normative concepts and categories with special psychodiagnostic methods. The use of psychodiagnostic methods determines psychodiagnostics as a fundamental discipline at any university. The course named "Fundamentals of Psychodiagnostics" develops competence of psychodiagnostic skills and their application in practice.

In our opinion, education of psychodiagnostics isn't limited to the mastery of knowledge, skills and abilities. Studying of Psychology includes objective knowledge and personal attitude to the subject of study, the unity of the cognitive and affective components. A professional reflection is needed to develop by future psychologists, their cognitive attitudes to this type of practice, understanding of their vocational self-determination. During training, psychodiagnostic knowledge and skills also must become personally meaningful or understandable for a student – psychologist.

Last century, the famous Russian psychologist S. Rubinstein, who had worked within the scope of the subjective approach in psychology, defined "understanding" as a "cognitive attitude of human as an active person, who is capable of purposeful activity in particular culture" (S. Rubinstein, 1942). Cognitive attitude includes reflection of

objective reality as personal experience. And any understanding is the unity of cognitive and affective components. According to subjective approach, A. Kim separates two different aspects of understanding:

1) The first one is effective or intensional aspect. Understanding is considered as an "operational meaning" as a content, or the result of cognitive relationships. "In an effective aspect to understand is to know a meaning of understood things" (V.Znakov, 1997).

2) The second one is procedural or formal-dynamic aspect. The process of understanding appears in two main forms of understanding. There are understanding as a recognition and understanding as an integration. In the first case understanding is based on once learned and stored in memory constructs, models, categories, stereotypes. This is form of understanding can be characterized in terms of "level" or "depth". In the second case, the process of understanding involves the creation of a new mental structure, as the untegration of the elements. It runs with no specified criteria, constructs or models. Such understanding is always individual, emotional and unique.

According to these theoretical concepts on the nature of understanding, we have formulated the following questions: 1) how is psychodiagnostics understood as a kind of psychological practices in comparison with other types of activities by under graduated and post graduated students – psychologists? 2) What are the differences in the understanding of under graduated and post graduated students – psychologists psychodiagnostics as a type of psychological practices? To answer these questions we conducted a research and as a method of research we modified semantic differential of C. E. Osgood. Semantic differential allows to fix the results of the process of understanding, its "operational meaning" or intensional aspect. Our modification of the SD measures the meaning of different kinds of the future activities of under graduated and post graduated students – psychologists. Psychosemantic method doesn't take into account selectivity and individual characteristics of understanding and doesn't identify the process of understanding as an untegration.

## 2. Organization of research

In modified version it was necessary for students to estimate the concepts "psychology", "psychodiagnostics", "psychotherapy", " psychological counseling" on 16 polar scales of SD. We were interested in student's attitudes to the field of psychodiagnostics, different terms have been selected by us for comparison. 42 students of Al-Farabi Kazakh National University (Faculty of Philosophy and Political Science) took part in research: 20 under graduated students and 22 post graduated students. In processing the results on each concept we singled out the qualities (scale) that are equally estimation 75-, 90-, 95- percents of the students. Then qualities were classified into 3 groups. The first group to the range from 75% to 90% was designated by name of the scale and by the word "almost". The second group to the range from 90% to 95% was designated only by name of the scale. And the third group to the range from 95% and above was designated by name of the scale and by the word "very". We used the Mann–Whitney U-test to verify the significance of differences in understanding of under graduated and post graduated students.

## 3. Results of research

1. Under graduated students have a high degree of internal concurrence of the group indexes concerning the concept "psychology". The concept "psychology" is positive for the under graduated students. But post graduated students formed an individual understanding of the concept "psychology". These differences are statistically significant ( $U = 278 > U_{max} = 273$ ). The results of the group indexes of the concept "psychology" by under graduated and post graduated students are presented in Table 1 and Table 2.

Table 1.

Tied group estimates of the concept "psychology" of under graduated and post graduated students. The method of SD

1 course students	% of the students, who have chosen that quality	4 course students	% of the students, who have chosen that quality
Clever	100 %	Clever	100%
Kind	100 %	Kind	95 %

Strong	100 %	Strong	95%
Pleasant	100 %	Pleasant	95%
Bold	100 %	Bold	86%
Happy	100 %	Happy	80%
Good	100 %	Good	77%
Clear	100 %	Clear	77%

Table 2.

Mismatched group estimates of the term "psychology" of under graduated and post graduated students. The method of SD

1 course students	% of the students, who have chosen that quality	4 course students	% of the students, who have chosen that quality
Active	100 %	Active	45 %
Young	100 %	Young	30 %

2. Under graduated students have a high degree of internal concurrence of the group indexes concerning the concept "psychodiagnostics" too. The post graduated students haven't 100% coincidences in the estimates of this concept. We suppose that their understanding of "psychodiagnostics" is differentiated and individual. The post graduated students have described as "hard" only the concept "psychodiagnostics". These differences are statistically significant ( $U = 345 > U_{max} = 273$ ). The results of the group indexes of the concept "psychology" by under graduated and post graduated students are presented in Table 3 and Table 4.

Table 3.

Tied group estimates of the concept "psychodiagnostics" of under graduated and post graduated students. The method of SD

1 course students	% of the students, who have chosen that quality	4 course students	% of the students, who have chosen that quality
Clever	100%	Clever	86
Kind	100%	Kind	86
Strong	87%	Strong	91
Hard	75%	Hard	86

Table 4.

Mismatched group estimates of the term "psychodiagnostics" of under graduated and post graduated students. The method of SD

1 course students	% of the students, who have chosen that quality	4 course students	% of the students, who have chosen that quality
Pleasant	100%	Firm	95 %
Good	100%	Cold	86
Active	100%	Strained	86
Clear	100%	Loud	82
Happy	87%		
Kind	81%		

3. The differences are statistically significant ( $U = 345 > U_{max} = 273$ ) in estimation of the concept of "psychotherapy" between under graduated and post graduated students. At the same time, the under graduated and post graduated students have chosen positive properties concerning the factor "assessment". The results of the group indexes of the concept "psychotherapy" by under graduated and post graduated students are presented in Table 5 and Table 6.

Table 5.

Tied group estimates of the concept "psychotherapy" of under graduated and post graduated students. The method of SD

1 course students	% of the students, who have chosen that quality	4 course students	% of the students, who have chosen that quality
Clever	100	Clever	95
Good	100	Good	90
Pleasant	100	Pleasant	90
Clear	100	Clear	86
Bold	100	Bold	82
Kind	87	Kind	82
Strong	87	Strong	82

Table 6.

Mismatched group estimates of the term "psychotherapy" of under graduated and post graduated students. The method of SD

1 course students	% of the students, who have chosen that quality	4 course students	% of the students, who have chosen that quality
Active	100	Active	35
Young	100	Young	50
Happy	95	Happy	65

4. The differences are statistically significant ( $U = 280 > U_{max} = 273$ ) in estimation of the concept "psychological counseling" between under graduated and post graduated students. There are the highest number of coincidences of the group estimates concerning this concept. We suppose that students-psychologists have formed a common understanding of this concept in the process of professional training. In addition, the post graduated students have formed new categories of adjectives of the factor "assessment" (for example, "relaxed", "soft"). These categories are opposite such categories as "strained" and "hard", which were characterized the "psychodiagnostics" as a type of practical activity. That's why the post graduated students assess the concepts "psychodiagnostics" and "psychological counseling" as the opposite types of practical activities. The results of the group indexes of the concept "psychological counseling" by under graduated and post graduated students are presented in Table 7 and Table 8.

Table 7.

Tied group estimates of the concept "psychological counseling" of under graduated and post graduated students. The method of SD

1 course students	% of the students, who have chosen that quality	4 course students	% of the students, who have chosen that quality
Bold	100	Clever	100
Pleasant	100	Bold	95
Clear	100	Good	95

Good	87	Pleasant	95
Clever	87	Happy	95
Kind	87	Clear	85
Strong	81	Strong	86
Happy	81	Good	87

Table 8.

Mismatched group estimates of the term "psychological counseling" of under graduated and post graduated students. The method of SD

1 course students	% of the students, who have chosen that quality	4 course students	% of the students, who have chosen that quality
Young	81	Young	45
Relaxed	47	Relaxed	87
Soft	64	Soft	75

#### 4. Conclusions:

1. There are statistically significant differences in estimation of four types of psychological activities (the concepts "psychology", "psychodiagnostics", "psychotherapy", "psychological counseling") between under graduated and post graduated students.

2. The under graduated students have a high degree and 100% coincidences of internal concurrence of the group estimates concerning these concepts.

3. The post graduated students show differentiated and individual understanding of psychology.

4. The factor "force" starts to dominate in understanding of psychodiagnostics on the senior course, but there is a dominant factor "assessment" concerning other concepts.

5. The post graduated students understand the concept "psychodiagnostics" as something "hard, cold, stained, heavy". At the same time, they understand the concept "psychological counseling" as "soft" and "relaxed".

Research results let us make the conclusions, that the understanding of psychology as theory and practice becomes more differentiated and individual at students to the fourth year of education. Psychodiagnostics and psychological counseling formed polar structures in professional consciousness of students of a final year, that corresponds to objective distinctions of these types of practical activities. At the same time, attitude to psychodiagnostics as to something «firm, cold, intense, heavy», revealing by graduates psychologists, can predetermine a negative attitude to psychodiagnostics as a sphere of possible future practical activities. It, in turn, this can slow down process of professional adaptation of the graduates who are not considering real inquiries of society.

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